

# **Executive Leadership Development in the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety**

Executive Leadership

BY: David Headings  
Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety  
Kalamazoo, Michigan

An applied research project submitted to the National Fire Academy as part of the  
Executive Fire Officer Program August 1998

## **ABSTRACT**

The Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety in June of 1994 indicated that it was developing a plan for leadership development throughout the department. Leadership has been questionable in the past and the lack of executive leadership has caused problems with morale and direction. This research project was prompted the progressed and development of leadership by the department. The historical research methodology was utilized. The research questions were:

1. What progress has the department made since it recognized problems in leadership in 1994?
2. What leadership programs has the department developed?
3. Does the department senior staff appear to have an understanding of leadership issues?
4. As a leadership issue, does promotion select the best candidates?
5. Are there other factors that influence the leadership development of the department?

A survey was conducted of eighteen first line and mid-level command officers to compile, correlate, and evaluate their opinions on leadership and its development. The interviews were taken from a staff lieutenant, the other from a recently retired assistant chief of the department. The training records of the last four years were also reviewed for the type of executive classes the department has sent its command officers to attend. These methods along with a literature review were combined to evaluate the department's executive leadership development program.

The results of these findings were that command officers felt that there was a great lack of training and understanding of leadership and its development by the senior staff.

The training records showed that there was confusion as to what courses were leadership, or management, or supervision. During the four years there were only four actual courses in leadership although several management and supervisory courses were titled "leadership." The two interviews revealed that there was no formal training for senior executives and very little for the lower commands.

The recommendations included total commitment and participation by senior staff to executive leadership development. There should be an understanding that the program of development should be structured and long-term. A clear understanding, by all command staff, of the difference between leadership, management, and supervision should be completed. Incentives must be incorporated into the system to encourage compliance. Finally, there must be better financial benefits and work scheduling to motivate the best applicants to apply for promotion.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	Page
Abstract.....	ii
Table of Contents.....	iv
Introduction.....	1
Background and Significance.....	3
Literature Review.....	5
Procedures.....	14
Results.....	17
Discussion.....	25
Recommendations.....	27
References.....	30
Appendix A.....	33
Appendix B.....	35

## INTRODUCTION

In June of 1994, the Kalamazoo (Michigan) Department of Public Safety initiated a plan to develop leadership throughout the department to prepare command officers for executive positions. A survey of personnel had indicated that the department, on the whole, felt that there was a lack of leadership and direction at the executive level of the department. Development of executive leadership has been questionable, and has been a primary problem. No one knows where the department is headed or what the present leadership wants of the subordinate staff. Fewer candidates are applying for promotional positions, which decrease the possible selection of the best leaders.

This author completed a six-month study on leadership within the department and concluded that there was significant confusion about leadership versus management (Headings, 1994). In that 1994 study the results was a lack of understanding of true leadership traits as opposed to management skill. The recommendations were 1. An assessment of the current style of leadership the department is projecting as well as a thorough look at what traits are necessary to be effective in the role of leadership should be clear to the decision-makers of the department. These traits should be encouraged and rewarded to those who are willing to exhibit them, 2. Research of schools that are available to perform leadership training should be evaluated for how much worth they would be toward training of leadership and do they actually train the traits of “leadership”. Hands-on type of training as well as study should be employed to train leaders. They should have the feel as well as the knowledge of leadership, 3. Because only one staff level command officer has completed the Executive Fire Officer course at the National Fire Academy it is recommended that the department actively recruit its employees to attend to prepare for executive command, 4. Continuous on-going training

to prepare employees for future roles as leaders should be conducted in-house to reinforce and underline outside formal schools of leadership training, and 5. There should be an in-depth look at why lower supervisors and rank-and-file members feel there is a lack of leadership and what is their input to alleviate the problem. Finally, a yearly assessment of the leadership program should be evaluated at all levels for necessary changes and updating.

What prompted this research project was an effort to assess the progress of leadership and how the department conducts its development of leaders. Leadership and its development can be a difficult objective. It is an intangible item and its measurements can be very subjective. Leadership and its development are the primary basis for successful organizations to not only survive but to flourish. Therefore, an intimate knowledge of leadership and its traits are needed to develop an effective program to prepare employees for the roles of leaders in the organization.

The historical research methodology was utilized. The research questions were:

1. What progress has the department made since it recognized problems of leadership in 1994?
2. What leadership programs has the department developed?
3. Does the department senior staff appear to have an understanding of leadership issues?
4. As a leadership issue, does promotion select the best candidates?
5. Are there other factors that influence the leadership development of the department?

## **BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE**

The City of Kalamazoo, Michigan covers an area of approximately twenty-four square miles. Its official census is just over 80,000 people, which increases to approximately 106,00 people with the college student population (IPEDS, 1995). Kalamazoo is the home of several collegiate educational institutions to include Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo College, Davenport College, and Kalamazoo Valley Community College. Two major hospitals are also in the city, Bronson Methodist Hospital, and Borgess Hospital. Major employers are Pharmacia & Upjohn Co., First of America Corp., Checker Motors, and James Rivers Paper Company.

In 1982 the city combined its police and fire departments into a Public Safety Department. This reduced its' staffing level from 350 to 260 personnel with the department now cross trained to respond to police, fire, and rescue incidents. Up until 1987 all command officers including senior staff were appointed from within the department. 1987 marked the first year that a senior staff position, deputy chief, was given to someone outside the department. When the next senior position of assistant chief opened in 1989, it went to someone outside of the organization. These two appointees were later promoted to chief and deputy chief respectively. The results had a negative effect on the organization. Few felt that these appointees had any investment in the organization. Indeed they were called "resume builders" with little concern for or knowledge of the organizational culture. The individuals were not noted for their leadership abilities nor during this time was there any hint of grooming, mentoring, or training for roles in leadership. What was seen was a constant decline of morale and

confidence toward the executive level. An internal union survey was conducted in 1993, which concluded what everyone had suspected. Morale and leadership was at an all time low. In 1994 this author also did a survey on leadership while researching the problems of leadership in the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety. This was an applied research project for the National Fire Academy as part of the Executive Fire Officer Program. The results of the survey were that there was significant confusion of leadership traits that were needed as opposed to management skills, which were given (Headings, 1994).

The new administration in 1994 had stated that the old order of business would be abolished and that the training in leadership development would be a high priority in the organization. Indeed there was an increase in classes for command officers and more formal training from outside sources were conducted.

The Executive Leadership Course of the Executive Fire Officer Program provided guidelines to executive leadership development. From taking this course the participants receive an understanding of the importance of leadership development within the organization. This research is important to the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety for three reasons. First, to determine if there has been progress in leadership. Second, has there been a successful development plan for leadership. Finally, what changes should be implemented to improve the leadership development process.



## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The purpose of the literature review was to search for written information on leadership and its development within an organization. This study concentrated on understanding of the role of a leader and the preparation, including formal training, for leadership.

Leaders must have certain skills that will lead an organization toward an established goal(s). Some of those skills are the ability to guide, influence, create, motivate, inspire, and enable. Leaders also create change and develop visions and mission statements. They are risk takers who are self-confident role models who encourage participation and self-expression. Author Roberts (1985, p.xiv) states that "Leadership is the privilege to have the responsibility to direct the action of others in carrying out the purpose of the organization, at varying levels of authority and with accountability for both successful and failed endeavors." Leaders must think beyond the role of a supervisor or even a manager. Leaders must think long term and strategically on how to effect positive change in an effective and well planned approach toward people. Thus, in the language of Covey (1990, p.170), "You simply can't think efficiency with people. You think effectiveness with people and efficiency with things." Managers think efficiency of resources, leaders think of how effective they and their people can be in "creating" the efficiency of resources. Understanding the differences in the roles of people in positions they think of as leadership is necessary for organizations. The development of leaders has to be an organizational priority to prepare for future executives.

Managing is making sure the work is completed efficiently. Leading is creating the work and everything around it. It is a very holistic view of the organization in getting

people to want to complete the organization's goals. Townsend and Gebhardt (1997, p.185) stated " Leadership is the creation of an environment in which others are able to self-actualize in the process of completing the job." Whatever the task each person must feel that he/she had a creative part in its completion. They should feel they have a noted and recognized worth to the organization. Another author Adizes (1996, p.222) goes on to say, "My role is not to solve problems, it is to create the right environment and provide the tools for them to solve their problems themselves. Like a homeopathic medical practitioner who maintains that a body has all it needs to identify and cure its own ills, I insist that my job is to enable the organizational body to treat itself." Sometimes a leader's position is not always to be the fixer and doer, as some may think. Leaders cannot solve all the problems nor can they or should they be the only creators of ideas or projects. They encourage, mentor, stimulate, and assist. In the view of other authors,

"The emphasis will no longer solely be on the CEO to make the decisions and leave the rest to others. CEOs will be expected to take a hand in creating an organizational climate that encourages others to participate in the decision-making process with upper management and then lead the implementation of those jointly made decisions" (Pincus, & DeBonis, p.305).

The entire organization should be included in the program of leadership. Everyone should feel they have a part to play in the direction of the department. This should be such a thorough part of the organization that it is just thought of as "just the way things are done."

The selection of a leader is also a critical issue in knowing the steps, which must be taken. Dwelling on past mistakes must not be the main focal point of either selection or implementation of leadership. Author Gilmore (1988, p.23) points out:

Like generals who are always fighting the last war, appointing authorities may make appointments based on a thoughtful analysis of the problems of the previous leader, not the fresh challenges that the new leader will face. They fail to use the leadership change as an opportunity to rethink the role and mission.

Often the board itself is part of the problem.

Leaders are paradigm makers; they create the future for the organization they lead. Only depending on history for their answers cannot do this. One of the greatest challenges of leadership, especially those taking on new leadership roles, is not only learning from past experiences but also breaking new ground. This ground breaking is a fundamental part of leadership as written by Blumen (1996, p.27): "For leaders, the greatest danger is to keep drawing upon behavior linked to bygone eras...To brave the storm of change, leaders must be bold enough to redefine the very terms of leadership." The leader must stimulate an atmosphere of risk taking. There should be a minimum fear of failure. Failure should be thought of as part of learning and great leaps forward.

The training of leadership, and its meaning, has taken on a new concept. Awareness of the needs of others, the surroundings, social climate are now apart of leadership. Separate authors relate to this, first Richard Beckhard (1996, p.128):

Leaders will need to pay attention to the social issues of protecting the environment and the planet, of creating a more just society, and of attending to the

increasing interest of significant numbers of people in finding meaning in their lives. Spirituality will not be a word reserved for the clergy.

We see the growing role of the modern leader. He/she must now have an inner and deeper function in developing people who will later lead and now follow. Spears (1998, p.201) continues this thought.

I have looked at some training programs for leaders, and I am discouraged by how often they focus on the development of skills to manipulate the external world rather than the skills necessary to go within and make the spiritual journey. I find that discouraging because it feeds a dangerous syndrome among leaders who already tend to deny their inner world.

The needs of our society are calling on leaders to touch areas never considered in the past. The demands employees, customers, governments, and communities make for internal needs to be met are what the executive leader has now to fulfill. It is through this fulfillment that followers will follow and leaders will have to lead. Social change and technology has changed the function of executive leaderships. Quick access to information and a changing global environment affects national organizations more and more.

Suppression of personality is the essence of managerial discipline. The same leader should be able to adapt to all circumstances: growth-seeking, cost-cutting, strategic redirection, systems implementation. This said, we must also recognize that men and women get the opportunity to lead because their personal traits seem congruent with what needs to be done (Dauphinais and Price 1998, p.131).

Government agencies are not immune from these changes. Their executive leaders have to adapt also to these effects. The face of leadership has to change as the dynamics of a fast changing world and social demand bear upon the fire service. This makes it necessary to train for new roles at the executive levels. This training must start not at the top level but right at the beginning of hiring of the first entry-level employee.

There has been an on-going argument about leadership. Is leadership something you can learn or is it something you are born with? This research does not go in-depth on this subject. However, the author's experiences and references have concluded that training can help. The process of leadership is learnable and can be improved with the proper training. The authors' Kouzes and Posner (1987, p.13) look at leadership training in this light.

Our research has shown us that leadership is an observable, learnable set of practices. Leadership is not something mystical and ethereal that cannot be understood by ordinary people. It is a myth that only a lucky few can ever decipher the leadership code. We have discovered hundreds of people who have led others to get extraordinary things done in organizations. There are thousands, perhaps millions, more. The belief that leadership cannot be learned is a far more powerful deterrent to development than is the nature of the leadership process itself.

Everyone has certain capabilities of leadership and they can be improved upon with formal training. Each will improve to the degree of his or her own abilities, however, whatever the improvement, it will be an asset to the department.

To initiate a program to educate executives in a leadership program, we must first understand the definition of leadership development. Its meaning is similar to the definition of organizational development as defined by Richard Beckhard in a book by D. D. Warrick (1985, p.19). "At that time we wanted to put a label on the program at General Mills...We clearly didn't want to call it management development because it was total organization-wide, nor was it human relations training although there was a component of that in it. We didn't want to call it organizational improvement because that's a static term, so we labeled the program 'Organizational Development,' meaning system-wide change effort." Leadership development must also be a system-wide, people oriented, dynamic effort. The method must not be just for executives, and not just for supervisors or managers. It must be for all employees, beginning at the entry level, that way it becomes an integral part of the organization's culture.

The cultivating of leadership in the fire service should be a continuing process that permeates the organization. Therefore, repeated and different courses and updated methods of leadership, and its understanding must be in place. Addressing this issue is author Owen (1990, p.156-157).

As Rome was not built in a day, so our capacity for leadership is not brought to peak performance with a single iteration from learning, to experience, and on to practice. It is only when our practice of leadership is repetitively grounded in our learning, as enriched by our experience that peak levels begin to emerge. There are no magic wands here, nor is there any cause for despair. The leadership we need is available in all of us. We have only to make it manifest.

At some time in its future an organization will be faced with serious problems that will need executive leadership to solve. It is then the organization will soar triumphantly or fail miserably. However, now is the time to develop that leadership. Now is the time for learning and preparation. It is only through a long continuous process will organizations have executive leadership capable of handling crisis effectively.

The development of leadership at the executive level should be not only continuous but also contemporaneous with the training of all levels. To reinforce the training that they require for their executives the upper-level executive must attend as well as send the leaders to these sessions. Dotlich and Noel (1998, p.72) address this.

If you have ever been in an executive education program, you have heard people say, "I really wish my boss was here." People wish this because once they return to work, no one is reinforcing the lessons learned or giving them the opportunity to apply what they have learned.

The importance of the training and its' support must start and continue at the top level of command. If the top level is perceived not to think it is important, neither will the subordinate levels. There should be a common strand of leadership development that is shared by all levels of management.

The process of educating executives in leadership is a formal planning operation. The development has to be structured so that it will be recognizable to the participants and allows analysis and evaluation by its implementers. One such plan has been explored by Moulton and Fickel (1993, p.53).

An executive development strategy should call for an alternating attendance sequence starting with an appropriate internal school, followed by a selected

external program. Later, that particular manager would return to a higher level internal program, followed by yet another external program experience. Ideally, this planned sequence of programs would call for regular education throughout an entire career, with such programs being carefully selected to match offerings to individual needs and job requirements at any career point. Such a strategy forces discipline into a process that has been largely unstructured in most companies. Executive program attendance can now be approached with seriousness and purpose, and can be as well managed as any other process. With the clout and full support of the corporate office, human resources departments and executive development staffs and line management, this planned approach to executive development can help assure the investment in executive resources will pay off in the long-term success of the firm.

The time and energy to train executives in leadership will have long lasting benefits to the organization. This development training may take on a variety of courses; however, it should be an updated process with a goal of having a learning organization with a creative atmosphere. Marc S. Bassin, Manager of the Organization Department at General Foods, has a different, yet still important, plan. He passes on some ideas of leadership development in a book by author Bolt (1989, p.191-192).

1. Accept the premise that leadership can be developed. Our experience proves it.
2. Approach it as an ongoing journey, not a short-term objective. It's a process with no discernible end.



3. Nontraditional approaches--particularly outdoor experiences--can be powerful development tools.
4. Be willing to accept some failures. If you're on the cutting edge and charting new waters, you are bound to make some mistakes.
5. Make sure you have top-level commitment--not just the endorsement, but commitment in the truest and fullest sense of the word.
6. Be prepared for change. It will manifest itself in ways you would never expect.

We see an approach not before mentioned, although not less important, that of acceptance of failure. Risk is a necessary element of growth and not all ideas will be successful.

Acceptable amounts of failure should be integrated into the learning process as part of the overall program. From the different authors we see different approaches. However, we also see a related strain of thought that runs through both ideas. First, there must be total commitment from the upper level of command. There should be participation in the program by senior staff for it to be a successful project. Secondly, we see that it must be a program that is long-term and continuous. The project has to become a part of the department's culture and that takes time.

From the information of the literature review the author believes there is a lack of understanding of the problems of leadership by the executive staff of the department. There is sufficient information to develop a process of education in leadership. It can be easily seen that the benefits of such a program will produce the type of staff to handle

future demands. The literature assisted in the formulating of recommendations to improve the system of executive development.

## **PROCEDURES**

A survey was conducted of first line and mid-level command officers (see appendix A). Twenty-six surveys were sent out and eighteen were returned. This was a five-part questionnaire for the purpose of compiling, correlating and evaluating the opinions of command officers below the senior-level. The surveys were hand delivered by the author at the beginning of the work shift, and the respondents were given to the end of the shift to hand them back in to the author.

All of the questions except number four had three categories to determine the degree of the problem as seen by the respondent. Question number four was a four category question to determine the number of times exposed to formal leadership training. "Positive" answers, which indicated that training was "more than adequate", were given two points. The "Somewhat", mid-range, answer was given one point, and if the answer was "negative" about training it was awarded a zero for points. Question number four had four categories. They were awarded the following weight for each category: "No" answers were zero (0) points, "One" answers were point-five (.5), "Two" answers have one (1) point, and answers of "More than two" have two (2) points. Multiplying the number of respondents (18) by the highest possible weighted score (2) in each category, thirty-six is the highest score possible. The department has always set a passing score at seventy-percent for all of its testing of employment, promotion, or performance. Therefore, this being a test on the department's performance on leadership development,

the author used seventy-percent of the highest possible score of thirty-six as a passing score. Using seventy-percent of thirty-six, which is twenty-five, as the very minimum for reaching the goal of training in leadership. Any score of twenty-five and above indicates how much the department is above minimum toward the goal. Anything below twenty-five indicate how much below minimum the department falls in that category. The scores are then added together and divided by the number of categories for an overall score.

The literature research was gathered from the Learning Resource Center at the National Emergency Training Center in Emmitsburg, Maryland, Western Michigan University Library and the Main Public Library in Kalamazoo, Michigan as well as private libraries in Michigan.

The author selected two individuals for interviews asking for responses to six questions (see appendix B). First, Assistant Chief Raymond Ampey (Ret.). He was selected because of the position he held until the recent past, as a senior executive within the department. Also because he is retired he would offer both an intimate knowledge of the executive staff and could be boldly critical, if necessary. The second interview was with Lieutenant Robert Oliphant, Commander of the Training Division. He was chosen because of his access to senior staff functions and decision making and his knowledge of training in the department.

The author also researched the formal training given by the department in the four years from 1994 through 1997. He had to study the content of the classes for accuracy for which they were labeled. He found that many of the classes, which were labeled leadership classes, were in fact management or supervisory classes. There was no filtering of classes as they all were taken at face value.

**Limitations and assumptions**

In the questionnaire it was assumed that all respondents answered honestly and that they all understood the difference between leadership, management, and supervision. They were given a working definition with the survey. It was also assumed that each respondent had exposure to the command ranks and its processes for at least four years. Because of executive positions not being filled, there could not be an adequate survey from upper-command. The survey is not representative of the traditional fire service and the data is specific to the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety. In the research into the formal classes given by the department it was assumed that the records were correct and complete and that the information on the content was accurate.

**Definitions**

The definition used of a leader is one who motivates, inspires and is a risk taker. He/she creates and articulates a vision of the organization in the future and he creates changes. A manager is one who keeps things stable. He/she directs organizes and controls, and works on efficiency. A supervisor is one who meets goals, solves problems as they occur and distributes resources. He/she is one who implements a plan.

## RESULTS

The scores of the five survey questions to the eighteen command officers who responded to the questionnaire were tabulated:

**TABLE 1**  
Response score to five categories on Leadership

SCORE	QUESTION #1	QUESTION #2	QUESTION #3	QUESTION #4	QUESTION #5	AVERAGE SCORE
36						
34						
32						
30						
28						
26						
24						
22						
20						
18						
16						
14						
12			13			
10					8	9.3
8	8	8		9.5		
6						
4						
2						

The highest possible score is thirty-six. The very minimum passing score for adequate training in leadership is twenty-five. The respondents identified that there is a problem in each of the five questioned areas. Noted on the table is that the minimum passing score is not even approached. Averaging in the five categories produces a below minimum score of nine-point-three. The survey indicates that the department has problems in all the noted areas as follows:

Question 1: During the last four years, has leadership been a problem in your department?

Answer: Twelve respondents answered "yes", two answered "no", and four answered "somewhat" for a weighted score of eight.

This is a score well below passing and is a definite indicator of leadership problems felt by command officers.

Question 2: Has there been adequate training for command officers in leadership?

Answer: Two respondents answered "yes", twelve answered "no", and four answered "somewhat" for a weighted score of eight.

This answer suggests there are problems in training command officers to prepare for leadership positions.

Question 3: Does your department differentiate the training in supervision, management, and leadership development?

Answer: Six respondents answered "yes", eleven answered "no", and one answered "somewhat" for a weighted score of thirteen.

The evidence here is that there is ignorance or at least confusion in understanding the differences of supervision, management, and leadership. A large percent of the respondents do not believe the department makes a clear distinction of the three positions.

Question 4: Have you had any training in a leadership course in the last four years?

Answer: Seven respondent answered "no", seven answered "one", two answered "two", and two answered "more than two" for a weighted score of eight.

The answers to question four imply that whatever the training is in leadership it is not adequate for a large majority of the command officers.

Question 5: Does the department prepare first line to mid-level command for executive command positions?

Answer: One respondent answered "yes", eleven answered "no", and six answered "somewhat" for a weighted score of eight.

The final answer reveals that most command officers feel there are shortcomings in the department's training for leaders to reach the executive level. The average score of the five weighted answers is nine-point-five.

The author researched the department's training records for the four years of 1994 through 1997. What was revealed to the author was that the department sent its command officers to a total of twenty-six command schools during this time. From reading the content of the classes it was found that although several courses were labeled leadership they in fact were either management or supervisory classes. From the twenty-six courses the breakdown was as follows: There were twelve supervisory courses, ten management courses, and only four courses in leadership. The supervisory courses were "Supervision for first line command" and were only given to recently promoted officers to the command ranks. The course consisted of learning listening skills, how to discipline and how to deal with people on a one-to-one basis. The management courses dealt with handling budgets, the efficiency of using resources, and team development. The leadership courses were on development of visions, mission statements and handling systems. They talked of risk taking and developing an atmosphere for creativity.

The author conducted two interviews (see appendix B) using six primary questions.

The following interviews were the summaries of the questions asked:

First, Assistant Chief Raymond Ampey (Ret.), personal interview, August 7, 1998:

Question 1: Is the reason that the number of applicants for higher positions has dropped sharply because of leadership problems?

Answer: Part of the reason that the numbers of department command officers don't apply for higher position is a leadership problem. There is no grooming or mentoring for higher promotions.

Question 2: Do you think the department knows the difference between leading, managing, or supervising?

Answer: I think that the chief and assistant chiefs understand the difference between leadership, management, and supervision, however, some of the division commanders do not. The chief's office, however, needs to stay focused on the subject of leadership. The can do this with the Budget, Goals and Objectives. This would be a structured plan of grooming and mentoring that would flow down the command ranks. Sergeants and lieutenants are really the ones who determine if leadership works in the department.

Question 3: Do you think the best candidates are putting in for promotion?

Answer: The best candidates are not applying for these positions. Part of the problem also is that people get too comfortable where they are. They don't want to move out of their comfort zones. Leadership should make it more comfortable for them to do so. We have union contract language that has caused problems also with promotions. Our mid-level operations command officers work a forty-two hour workweek with a twelve-hour workday. Everyone else works a forty-hour hour workweek with an eight-hour day,



including higher-ranking command. Only mid-level command works holidays. Because of this the pay range for mid-level command is higher than most upper command officers. Add to that the twelve-hour day gives mid-level command eighty-two less days a year that they come to work in comparison to the eight-hour day employee. This lowers the incentive greatly to strive for higher command.

Question 4: How much leadership training does senior staff get?

Answer: There has been little senior staff training in leadership. It is mostly on-the-job training. It has been discussed because when you get to division command ranks there should be some sort of formal leadership training.

Question 5: What do you think the department should be doing about executive leadership training?

Answer: The executive leadership training should start at the lieutenant's rank.

Question 6: Have you seen any progress in leadership in the last four years.

Answer: I have seen more actual formal training in the past four years for command officers. This training has been for leadership and management.

The second interview: Lieutenant Robert Oliphant, personal interview, August 9, 1998:

Question 1: Is the reason the number of applicants for higher positions have dropped sharply because of leadership problems?

Answer: There is no question about it that leadership is the reason that applicants for higher positions have dropped. The leadership of many divisions is the problem because there is not effective management. There are not enough resources for them to do the job. It is not in the budget.

Question 2: Do you think the department knows the difference between leading, managing or supervising?

Answer: The department does not know the difference between leadership, management, or supervision. You can say that management and supervision is the same. However, when you are one-on-one, that is supervision. Leadership is a separate issue. There is a reluctance to coach or mentor someone.

Question 3: Do you think the best candidates are putting in for promotions?

Answer: The best candidates are not putting in for promotion because they recognize the shortcomings of the system. The finances make it not worth it to promote and some do not want to be moved off the day shift to work nights. Also the operations division personnel, because of the twelve-hour day and forty-two-hour workweek, really only work six months out of the year, if you count vacations and holiday leave days.

Question 4: How much leadership training does senior staff get?

Answer: There is very little leadership training for senior staff. We used to send them to the FBI Academy but we don't anymore. The training is now left up to the division commanders. They decide what training to send people to and senior staff does not support the training.

Question 5: What do you think the department should be doing about executive leadership training?

Answer: We should have a program in place to begin development of executives, even at the entry level. We need a formal program to assist and develop people in-house. We need an overall game plan. Right now we only send new sergeants to a three-day supervisory school. We should be sending lieutenants and above to a five-day leadership

school once a year. This would help give a sense of unity for the common goals of the department. We would all be on the same page of what leadership is, what management is, and what supervision is.

Question 6: Have you seen any progress in leadership in the last four years?

Answer: As far as progress in leadership development in the last four years, I have not seen any progress in leadership in the last four years. There has been nothing.

The two interviewees indicated that there were problems with executive training in leadership with the department. From the survey, the literature review, and the interviews, the answers to the research questions are as follows:

Question 1: What progress has the department made since it recognized problems of leadership in 1994?

Answer: The department has increased the classes that command officers now attend from eleven the previous four years to twenty-six the last four years. Most of the classes are for first-line supervisors and the classes are for supervision, not for leadership. There were twelve of these courses. Two sergeants, two lieutenants, and one assistant chief attended ten courses in management. Four leadership courses were attended by two lieutenants to include the Executive Fire Officers Program on Executive Leadership attended by the author.

Question 2: What leadership programs has the department developed?

Answer: During the past four years there were no programs developed by the administration in leadership. Other than the few classes in supervision and management, which were classes given outside the department, only one management class was given at the department itself. There were no leadership classes either at or by the department.

Question 3: Does the department senior staff appear to have an understanding of leadership issues?

From gathering information from the two interviews it appears that the senior staff has yet to learn the true meaning of leadership. There are no classes that the senior staff attends on leadership to know the latest information on leadership issues. No information is passed down to lower command that leadership training is an important issue. The senior command does not demand or get involve in the training or mentoring, or coaching of lower command to prepare them of higher leadership duties.

Question 4: As a leadership issue, does promotion select the best candidate?

Answer: With the drop of candidates for promotion, from an average of six to an average of three, the list of choices for higher command limits the ability for the department to choose the best candidates. The department does not encourage its members to take the steps to qualify for higher positions. There is no program in place to prepare for executive command through education, training, or mentoring. Few on the department qualify for the education level that is recommended for positions of assistant chief, deputy chief, or the chief position. There is no incentive or little assistance to qualify.

Question 5: Are there other factors that influence the leadership development of the department?

Answer: Because of the union contract with the forty-two-hour workweek and twelve-hour-day, the financial situation does not encourage promotion past lieutenant. The commands above lieutenant are on forty-hour workweeks and do not work overtime or holidays. This causes an overlap of pay by operation's lieutenants that brings them up to and sometimes passing assistant chief positions, as far as pay is concern. These lieutenant positions also, again because of the work hours, work eighty-two fewer days a year than the command above them.

## **DISCUSSION**

It is apparent that there is no leadership development of executives or for executives in any of the command ranks. In the opinions of department personnel, based on those responding to the survey, the executive staff does not understand leadership issues, nor do they provide a program for development. There is no training for the senior executives themselves. The literature review information clearly states that there should be a program in place, which prepares the employees for higher positions of command. The program should carry throughout the command ranks and it should not only have the full backing of senior command, they should be active participants of the program. The training for executive leadership should be a long-term ongoing program that incorporates the entire department. It has to be understood that this is a program that is going to be a part of the department's culture. It will be an integral part of being employed.

The study result reveals that there is a lack of leadership development shown in the lack of choices of command being promoted in the department. There is also a lack of ability to choose high-ranking personnel from inside the department because leadership programs do not exist. The department has no educational programs or mentoring programs to prepare personnel of higher command positions. The financial rewards and work schedule does not motivate promotion past the rank of operations lieutenant.

Surprisingly, little was discovered in the literature review concerning actual programs of executive leadership development. The information from the Learning Resource Center at the National Fire Academy listed 95 Executive Fire Officer papers on leadership. However, there were no papers written on executive leadership development. The information, which was given, suggests that any program developed should be tailored to the different types of organizations. There is, however, enough information to form a development program, which will fit in with any organizational culture.

The results of the prior leadership study show that there has been an attempt to enhance leadership by the department administration by an increase in classes given to command officers. However, there is no structured training and no indicator that the executive level command really knows the difference from leadership versus management. More study into understanding the difference is needed by the executive staff.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations of the previous study four years ago support the analysis of this study. The Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety should develop a program of understanding leadership and develop a program of executive leadership. Although there has been an increase in courses they have not met the needs of the department in leadership. The following are recommendations for the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety in development of a leadership program:

Total commitment to a leadership development program by senior executives, to include participation is needed. If any program as important as this one needs to be successful, it has to have the full backing of the top executives. Not only should they support the program, but also to understand direction in which the program is going, they have to be active participants.

The program should be understood to be a long-term and ongoing process. Quick fix, "band-aid" type measures are not the answer. This has to be a permanent program that will become institutionalized into the department. It has to be a part of the work cycle of the organization, which is expected by the employees.

There needs to be a clear understanding by all command staff of the difference between leadership, management, and supervision. The training of the executives must be recognized for what it is. There are numerous courses that give the impression that they are leadership courses. These must be correctly labeled for the purpose of the intent of the

training. If they are going to send command officers to learn the skills of supervisor or the efficiency of a manager, this should be clearly understood regardless of the course title. Leadership title courses should be carefully scrutinized for their content.

The department should have a planned program on leadership. This would include outside formal classes, departmental classes, and peer teaching activities. Each executive would have someone to formally groom and mentor for later leadership positions. This would increase the effectiveness of the program making it structured as a plan and productive in being absorbed into the culture in peer teaching.

The senior executives will have to decide what is the organizational philosophy is toward leadership and how it fits into the organizational culture. Each organization is different and will have different type needs to be met. When developing an educational plan for its command officers, the choices of directions must be tailored to suite the desired direction.

To underscore the path that the training will take, there must be incentives to practice and participate. A reward system should be in place to encourage compliance with the program. As part of their evaluation, both the mentor and recipient should be scored on how they received and/or administered leadership training.

The administration has to balance the financial disadvantage of promoting past operation lieutenant. Along with pay, the command position of captain and above should



also be put on the forty-two-hour workweek to bring everyone to working the same number of days a year.

In summary the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety should start on a development program of long-term commitment. This program should be a high profile course of development which will communicate to all command that leadership is high priority with a senior staff who are also participants. There must be a general knowledge of leadership, and what it is, by the upper-level command. Once they understand that there is a difference between leadership versus management versus supervision, they can develop a plan of leadership education. A committed program could improve the feelings of the department personnel on the lack of leadership in the executive staff. If a program of leadership is developed there can be an improvement in the morale of the personnel and the confidence in those in higher command ranks.

Continued research is needed to verify the survey results and opinions of those interviewed. Further investigation is also needed into the type of courses that are being offered by the department and also the type of courses that are available for leadership education to confirm the findings in this report.

## REFERENCES

Adizes, I., (1996). The Pursuit of Prime. Santa Monica: Knowledge Exchange.

Bolt, J.F. (1989). Executive Development: A Strategy for Corporate Competitiveness.  
New York: Harper & Row.

Covey, S. R. (1990). The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. New York: Simon &  
Schuster.

Dauphinais, G. W. & Price, C. (1998). Straight From the CEO. New York: Simon &  
Schuster.

Dotlich, D. L. & Noel, J. L. (1998). Action Learning. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Gilmore, T. N., (1988). Making a Leadership Change. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Headings, D. (1995). Confusion of Leadership Traits and Management Skill in the  
Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety. (Executive Fire Officer Research Paper).  
Emmitsburg, MD: National Fire Academy.

IPEDS (1995). College Blue Book. 25<sup>th</sup> Ed. Vol. II. New York: Simon & Schuster,  
McMillan.

Kouzes, J. M. and Posner, B. Z. (1987). The Leadership Challenge. San Francisco:

Jossey-Bass

Lipman-Blumen, Jean. (1996). The Connective Edge. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Publishers

Moulton, H.W. & Fickel, A. A., (1993). Executive Development: Preparing for the 21<sup>st</sup>

Century. New York: Oxford University Press.

Owen, H., (1990). Leadership Is. Potomac, MD: Abbott Publishing

Pincus, J. D. and DeBonis, J. N., (1994). Top Dog. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.

Roberts, W., (1985). Leadership Secrets of Attila The Hun. New York: Warner Books,

Inc.

Spears, L. C., (1998). Insights on Leadership. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Townsend, P. & Gebhardt, J. (1997). Five-Star Leadership. New York: John Wiley &

Sons, Inc.

Warrick, D. D., (1985). Contemporary Organization Development. Glenview, Ill: Scott, Foreman and Co.

## **Appendix A**

This is an applied research course project for The National Fire Academy.

Your assistance will be greatly appreciated in filling out this questionnaire. Do not sign your name. This is a survey on Leadership Development. Thank you for your assistance.

Lt. David Headings, Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety.

## COMMAND LEADERSHIP SURVEY

1. During the last four years, has leadership been a problem in your department? Yes.  
No. Somewhat.
2. Has there been adequate training for command officers in leadership? Yes. No.  
Somewhat.
3. Does your department differentiate the training in supervision, management, and  
leadership development? Yes. No. Somewhat.
4. Have you had any training in a leadership course in the last four years? No. If yes,  
how many sessions? One? Two? More than two?
5. Does the department prepare first line to mid-level command for executive command  
positions? Yes. No. Somewhat.

## **APPENDIX B**

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Is the reason that the number of applicants for higher positions has dropped sharply because of leadership problems?
2. Do you think the department knows the difference between leading, managing or supervising?
3. Do you think the best candidates are putting in for promotion?
4. How much leadership training does senior staff get?
5. What do you think the department should be doing about executive leadership training?
6. Have you seen any progress in leadership in the last four years?